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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BEIRUT 001711

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SUBJECT: MGLE01: AMBASSADOR CRUMPTON DISCUSSES TERRORISM
WITH JUSTICE MINISTER RIZK

Classified By: Ambassador Jeffrey Feltman for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (C) SUMMARY. U.S. State Department Coordinator for Counterterrorism Ambassador Crumpton and the Ambassador visited Justice Minister Charles Rizk to discuss the causes and possible solutions to terrorism in the region. Rizk told Ambassador Crumpton that the major cause of political instability in Lebanon is the lack of a concept of a nation state. Rizk and Ambassador Crumpton then discussed the complexity of both Iranian society and the Lebanese militia Hizballah. Rizk agreed with the Ambassador about a consensus view in Lebanon to combat al-Qaeda. Rizk told Ambassador Crumpton that USG assistance money could best be spent on practical needs such as spare parts for helicopters. Rizk favors a broadening of the mandate of the proposed special tribunal with international character beyond Rafiq Hariri's murder because he believes that the Lebanese judicial system is not competent to solve all of the unresolved assassinations in Lebanon. END SUMMARY

2. (C) After discussing his role in providing a USG policy context and coordinating counterterrorism efforts, Ambassador Crumpton thanked Minister Rizk for his efforts and his determination in working with the USG on counterterrorism issues. Crumpton told Rizk that the USG was looking at a comprehensive, strategic approach, using regional partners, to combat terrorism. According to Crumpton, the long-term strategic objective of stopping enemy forces will be solved by more than just law enforcement and military methods. Economic development, the rule of law, and other instruments of statecraft will be important, and regional solutions with USG partners will help achieve these long-term goals.

POLITICAL INSTABILITY IN LEBANON CAUSED
BY LACK OF A CONCEPT OF A NATION STATE

3. (C) Rizk told Crumpton that the roots of terrorism can be found in dire economic and political conditions, but he stated that the main reason for political instability in Lebanon is the absence of the concept of a nation state. According to Rizk, some people in Lebanon pledge their loyalty first to an Islamic, Arab, Syrian, Christian, or Lebanese nation. Rizk stated that the Lebanese Muslim community understood in 1943 that they were better off living under a Christian president in an independent Lebanon rather than controlling a small, insignificant province of Syria. When Crumpton asked Rizk what would be the common bond among the Lebanese, Rizk answered that Lebanon's diversity may represent its common bond, as each of the three main blocs--the Sunni, the Shiites, and the Christians--represent roughly one-third of the population.

IRANIAN SOCIETY AND HIZBALLAH

COMPLEX AND MULTI-FACETED

14. (C) When Rizk told Crumpton that the USG should sit down and talk to the Iranians concerning the nuclear issue, Crumpton told him that the USG was very interested in working with the European Union, the United Nations, Russia, and others to achieve a diplomatic solution in Iran. Crumpton told Rizk that the USG hasn't ruled out any possible deal that would resolve the situation, and he hoped that Iran would opt for the Libyan solution of renouncing terrorism and integrating with the international community. Rizk told Crumpton that he was in favor of USG diplomatic efforts, but Iranian society is much more complex than Libyan society. Crumpton stressed to Rizk that demographic changes in Iran have created a population with a much different view than the current leadership.

15. (C) Rizk told Crumpton that he had contrasting views of Hizballah. He said that many Hizballah party members are very sophisticated, intelligent, and responsible. Rizk said Hizballah was "multi-faceted" and he prefers the order that Hizballah provides in southern Lebanon to the anarchy that was prevalent when the Palestinian Liberation Organization controlled parts of southern Lebanon. While acknowledging Hizballah terrorist actions, Rizk said that considering Hizballah as only a terrorist organization "misses the target." He told Crumpton that he must work with the Shiite ministers on a daily basis, and some of the Shiite ministers are very serious and hard working ministers.

LEBANESE CONSENSUS
OF FIGHTING AL-QAEDA

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16. (C) Rizk agreed with the Ambassador that there is a consensus in Lebanon on concerns about the destructive nature of al-Qaeda. When the Ambassador asked about how the ISF coordinates with the GOL decision makers and particularly with the judiciary on court cases, Rizk said that the Lebanese security apparatus was still in transition. Rizk further stated that there is currently a lack of leadership and no feeling of allegiance in the Lebanese army.

USG ASSISTANCE
MUST BE PRACTICAL

17. (C) When Crumpton asked how USG assistance could help the GOL's counter-terrorism efforts, Rizk emphasized the need for practical assistance, such as spare parts for helicopters. When Crumpton asked Rizk about current rule of law programs at the Ministry of Justice, Rizk said, unfortunately, there is no current program in place other than training programs for magistrates. When Crumpton asked Rizk about Lebanese Ministry of Justice coordination with other Ministries of Justice in the region, Rizk said that there was infrequent collaborations on issues of regional importance. He told Crumpton that only the Kuwaitis and Qataris supported the GOL at a recent Arab League conference when the Lebanese defended the rights of a free press when dealing with security problems. Rizk further stated that coordination with neighboring countries was difficult when there was a lack of coordination on policy within Lebanon. He compared GOL Cabinet meetings to a mini-United Nations.

ASSASSINATION PROBE
SHOULD BE EXTENDED

18. (C) When Ambassador Crumpton asked Rizk if he was satisfied with counterterrorism legislation in Lebanon, Rizk and his aides said legislation may be sufficient for internal domestic terrorism, but Rizk stressed that international help

was needed for acts of terrorism that involve international players. Rizk said he was in favor of the United Nations Independent Investigation Commission (UNIIIC) and its extension. He said he favored UNIIIC head Brammertz's views on extending the proposed special tribunal on the Hariri assassination to other assassinations because the judicial system in Lebanon is not competent to solve the unresolved cases and many additional causal relationships between the political murders could be uncovered through increased investigations.

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